

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE  
GOVERNOR



**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**  
20301 MAIL SERVICE CENTER • RALEIGH, NC 27699-0301

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**Contact: Chris Mackey**  
**Office: (919) 733-5612**

## **UF selects Gov. Perdue for distinguished alum honor**

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — It's a long, arduous journey from the University of Florida campus and Norman Hall (home of UF's College of Education) to the North Carolina Executive Mansion, the governor's official residence in Raleigh, N.C. Especially for a woman. But Beverly (call me "Bev") Perdue, holder of two UF education degrees, traveled that road over the past three-plus decades before her election in 2008 as the Tar Heel state's first woman governor.

Gov. Perdue is still a newsmaker at her Florida alma mater, with UF President Bernie Machen announcing Tuesday that Perdue will receive the university's 2010-11 Distinguished Alumnus Award.

"Bev Perdue's achievements as a long-time public servant, a champion of education and now as governor of North Carolina certainly make her one of our most illustrious and accomplished graduates," said Catherine Emihovich, dean of UF's College of Education.

Beverly Eaves Perdue is a "double EduGator" with two education degrees from UF. She earned a master's degree in community college administration in 1974 and a doctorate in educational administration two years later. She also has a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Kentucky.

Perdue, a genuine coal miner's daughter from Southwest Virginia, says she figured she was heading for a career in academics while pursuing her doctorate. But fate led her down a different path.

Before attending UF, Perdue had taught ninth grade at a Jacksonville middle school and 12th grade at Ocala Vanguard High School in central Florida. After completing her UF studies, she and her family moved to New Bern, N.C., where she worked in health care before becoming the first woman from her district elected to the state House of Representatives.

"The insiders all told me that a woman could never win in my eastern North Carolina district," Perdue said. "Times have changed dramatically, but I've never given up the drive to break down those barriers (that women have faced).

"I have never been afraid of a challenge."